

Message Text

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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR JOHNSON'S STATEMENT OF NOVEMBER 6, 1973

(SALT TWO - 339)

THE FOLLOWING IS STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR JOHNSON
AT THE SALT TWO MEETING OF NOVEMBER 6, 1973.

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR JOHNSON

NOVEMBER 6, 1973

MR. MINISTER:

TODAY I WILL ADDRESS THE IMPORTANT SUBJECT OF THROW-
WEIGHT OF ICBMS. THE U.S. SIDE RAISED THIS SUBJECT IN THE
EARLIER PHASES OF SALT, AND THE PASSAGE OF TIME AND EVENTS
HAS INCREASINGLY REINFORCED THE IMPORTANCE OF ICBM THROW-WEIGHT
TO THESE NEGOTIATIONS. I HAVE FREQUENTLY REFERRED TO THE
SUBJECT OF THROW-WEIGHT AT THE CURRENT SESSION, MOST RECENTLY
AT OUR LAST MEETING.

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IT IS INSUFFICIENT, BOTH IN TERMS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF

EQUAL SECURITY INTERESTS WITH NO UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE AND IN TERMS OF THE ENHANCEMENT OF STRATEGIC STABILITY, TO RESOLVE ONLY THE QUESTION OF THE NUMBER OF ICBM LAUNCHERS. IT IS ALSO NECESSARY TO RESOLVE THE QUESTION OF MULTIPLE REENTRY VEHICLE SYSTEMS AND THE QUESTION OF THE INHERENT CAPABILITIES OF ICBMS; THAT IS, THEIR USEFUL PAYLOAD. FURTHERMORE, IN A PERMANENT AGREEMENT, WE MUST RESOLVE THESE QUESTIONS FOR THE INDEFINITE FUTURE.

THE RELATIVE DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL OF ICBMS OF DIFFERENT TYPES IS A FUNCTION OF THEIR RELATIVE CAPABILITY TO PROJECT A USEFUL PAYLOAD INTO AN INTERCONTINENTAL TRAJECTORY. I BELIEVE THE TERM "ICBM THROW-WEIGHT" IS GENERALLY UNDERSTOOD BY BOTH SIDES; IT IS AN OBJECTIVE MEASURE (FIGURE OF MERIT) SUITABLY RELATED TO THE USEFUL CAPABILITY OF MISSILE BOOSTERS AND THUS TO THE DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL OF MISSILES.

YOU WILL REMEMBER THAT IN SUCCESSFULLY NEGOTIATING THE ABM TREATY, WE ENCOUNTERED AN ANALOGOUS PROBLEM CONCERNING THE LIMITATION OF PHASED ARRAY RADARS OTHER THAN THOSE SPECIFICALLY PERMITTED UNDER OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE DRAFT TREATY THEN UNDER CONSIDERATION. IT WAS FINALLY AGREED THAT THERE APPEARED TO BE NO BETTER FIGURE OF MERIT, THE ADEQUATE VERIFICATION OF WHICH WAS POSSIBLE THROUGH THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL MEANS OF BOTH SIDES, THAN THE PRODUCT OF THE MEAN EMITTED POWER AND THE AREA OF THE APERTURE OF SUCH RADARS. YOU WILL REMEMBER THAT WE CONSIDERED VARIOUS ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF EXPRESSING THIS FIGURE OF MERIT IN LESS TECHNICAL TERMS AND CAME TO THE FINAL CONCLUSION THAT ALL SUCH CIRCUMLOCUTIONS INTRODUCED UNACCEPTABLE AMBIGUITIES AND IMPRECISIONS.

IN THE PAST, BOTH SIDES HAVE ATTEMPTED TO DEAL WITH THE RELATIVE DESTRUCTIVE POTENTIAL OF MISSILES IN LESS TECHNICAL AND CORRESPONDINGLY LESS MEANINGFUL TERMS. FOR INSTANCE, THE INTERIM AGREEMENT REFERS ONLY TO A GENERAL AND LOOSELY DEFINED DISTINCTION BETWEEN LAUNCHERS FOR SO-CALLED "LIGHT" AND "HEAVY" MISSILES. FOR THE PURPOSE OF A SHORT-TERM FREEZE THIS DISTINCTION HAS A CERTAIN UTILITY. IN ITS UNILATERAL STATEMENT OF MAY 26, 1972, DEALING WITH "HEAVY ICBMS" THE UNITED STATES SAID IT "WOULD CONSIDER ANY ICBM HAVING A VOLUME SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER THAN THAT OF THE LARGEST

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LIGHT ICBM NOW DEPLOYED BY EITHER SIDE TO BE A HEAVY MISSILE."

HOWEVER, LOOSELY DEFINED DEFINITIONS ARE NOT ADEQUATE FOR AN AGREEMENT OF INDEFINITE DURATION. MEANINGFUL CONSTRAINTS ON ICBM CAPABILITY SHOULD BE BASED ON THOSE CHARACTERISTICS OF ICBMS ADEQUATELY VERIFIABLE BY NATIONAL TECHNICAL MEANS WHICH BEST MEASURE THE RELATIVE CAPABILITIES OF SUCH MISSILES. THEY SHOULD TAKE INTO ACCOUNT DIFFERENCES IN DESIGN APPROACH BETWEEN

THE TWO SIDES AS WELL AS POTENTIAL TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES. FOR INSTANCE, MISSILES USING CERTAIN PROPELLANTS CAN HAVE TWO OR THREE TIMES THE THROW-WEIGHT CAPABILITY OF A MISSILES OF EQUAL VOLUME BUT USING OTHER PROPELLANTS. EVEN MISSILES OF EQUAL VOLUME WITH THE SAME PROPELLANT CAN VARY IN THEIR THROW-WEIGHT CAPABILITY BY A FACTOR OF TWO OR MORE DEPENDING UPON THE NUMBER OF STAGES AND THE TYPE OF STRUCTURE EMPLOYED. THE DEPTH AND DIAMETER OF A SILO IS AN EVEN MORE INDIRECT MEASURE OF THE THROW-WEIGHT OF MISSILES. MISSILES GREATLY DIFFERING IN VOLUME CAN BE LAUNCHED FROM SILOS OF IDENTICAL DEPTH AND DIAMETER DEPENDING ON THE CONFIGURATION OF THE MISSILE AND THE LAUNCH SYSTEM EMPLOYED. THROW-WEIGHT MEASURES THE INHERENT CAPABILITY OF MISSILES IN A MANNER WHICH EQUITABLY ACCOUNTS FOR THESE DIFFERENCES AND IS INSENSITIVE TO FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN BOOSTER TECHNOLOGY AND LAUNCH TECHNIQUES AVAILABLE TO THE TWO SIDES.

THE CAPABILITY OF AN ICBM IS DETERMINED BY OTHER CHARACTERISTICS IN ADDITION TO ITS THROW-WEIGHT, FOR EXAMPLE, THE NUMBER OF WARHEADS, THEIR ACCURACY, AND THEIR YIELD TO WEIGHT RATIO. BUT EVEN HERE, THE THROW-WEIGHT DETERMINES THE COMBINATIONS OF NUMBERS AND WEIGHTS OF REENTRY VEHICLES AN ICBM CAN CARRY. ICBMS WITH LARGE THROW-WEIGHT ARE OF PARTICULAR CONCERN BECAUSE THEY HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CARRY EITHER A LARGER NUMBER OF WARHEADS OR WARHEADS OF LARGER YIELD.

APART FROM DIRECT LIMITATIONS ON MULTIPLE REENTRY VEHICLES, WHICH I DO NOT PROPOSE TO DISCUSS TODAY, NEITHER SIDE HAS PROPOSED LIMITS ON OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF ICBMS, SUCH AS ON IMPROVEMENTS IN THE ACCURACY OR IN THE YIELD TO WEIGHT RATIO OF THE REENTRY VEHICLES. IT HAS PROVED EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO FIND MEASURES VERIFIABLE BY NATIONAL TECHNICAL MEANS EFFECTIVELY TO DEAL WITH THESE LATTER POSSIBILITIES.

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THE TWO SIDES ARE IN AGREEMENT THAT IN WORKING OUT A PERMANENT AGREEMENT ON MORE COMPLETE MEASURES TO LIMIT STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS, IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF THE RECOGNITION OF THE EQUAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE PARTIES WITH NO UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE, THE RELATIVE CAPABILITIES OF THE ICBMS ON THE TWO SIDES ARE CRUCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE STABILITY OF THE STRATEGIC NUCLEAR RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. IT IS FOR THESE REASONS THAT I HAVE TODAY GIVEN SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE IMPORTANT SUBJECT OF THROW-WEIGHT.

JOHNSON

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